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BEGINNING INSTRUCTION IN

THE COMMUNICATION SKILLS
(TITLE)

BY

Blanche Heath Price

PLAN B PAPER

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION
AND PREPARED IN COURSE

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1965
YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS PLAN B PAPER BE ACCEPTED AS
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Introductory Statements

Communication is the basis of all learning. From the time the newborn infant gives forth his first lusty yell until the last feeble breath is drawn, man communicates with man. Many theories have been propounded as to how communication was first put into words and language began. How language began has no particular bearing on learning today. Now that man does have language, his interests are in its perpetuation and use. This involves teaching. Man continually seeks new ideas and methods of teaching. Ideas and "isms" rise and fall like waves of the sea. New ideas and inventions are grasped eagerly as the "break through" in learning only to be recognized later as aids to learning but not the answer to all learning problems.

How man learns and how to teach others are and ever shall be pertinent problems. Long ago learning was broken down into segments labeled "subjects" and then these subjects broken down into steps of learning to be acquired year by year. This organization of learning seems logical and sensible, and usually produces an end product that is acceptable. As the population increases, the universality of education becomes accepted, and the goals of education set higher, there is increasing danger that the end products be inferior to those of the past. Instruction in the public schools is beginning to

resemble assembly line production. One teacher contributes one segment of instruction to the student. Other teachers contribute according to a predetermined plan for the student. The end product that rolls off the learning line at the end of twelve, sixteen, or more years, is expected to be eagerly lapped up by human society and placed into a worthwhile niche.

This highly organized educational process sounds like progress but may not be. Man is an integrated human being. Everything he does is a part of what he is. There may be real danger that the pupils of tomorrow be less capable than those of today. Teachers are not cogs in educational machinery. Teachers must strive to be competent in the fields in which they instruct. They must strive also to be informed of the overall picture of learning. They must know what learnings come before and after this particular time that they are teaching the pupil. Ideally separate learnings produce an integrated whole. Realistically the student may have mastered only a hodge podge of unrelated facts.

B. Purpose of the Study

This paper is an effort to look at the communication skills individually to show their integration and inseparability. The important role these skills play in the total educational picture will be stressed. The need to integrate these skills more closely into today's school curriculum is the basic theme of this paper. The importance of the communication skills and the need of teaching them in close relationship is ably stated below.

> It is very difficult to imagine or describe a school day void of communication by language. At all grade levels

> listening, speaking, reading, and writing provide the basis for a functioning school program. The exploration of all fields of knowledge and intellectual endeavor is dependent upon the ability of individuals and groups to communicate.
>
> Those who have suffered the loss of their powers to communicate are perhaps in the best position to appreciate the satisfactions and beauty associated with these abilities--the ability to listen, the ability to speak, the ability to read both aloud and silently, and the ability to write. Because the communicative process affects our personalities, achievements, and human relations so vitally, careful attention to the cultivation of these is of utmost importance.
>
> At this point in the history of American education the broad fields approach is generally accepted with respect to teaching English language communication. Attempts to teach listening, speaking, reading, and writing in tight, isolated time units regardless of their interrelationships is inconsistent with our current knowledge of the educational process.[1]

For the sake of organization this paper is divided into chapters with each facet of language discussed separately. This, however, should not be construed to mean that language arts should be taught separately. Particular writing, reading, and spelling skills could be practiced at specific times, but the need to view them as parts of a whole rather than separate subjects of a curriculum is of major concern.

C. Limitations

This paper will be confined to the first grade level of instruction in the communication skills. The skills generally taught under the subject heads, writing, spelling, and language will be discussed separately. Since listening is important in all learning situations,

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[1] English Language Communication, Bulletin Number C-Six, The Illinois Curriculum Program, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Springfield, Illinois, 1961, p. V.

it is included in this paper although some writers do not consider listening a separate skill to be taught as such. The study of reading is omitted from this paper. Reading is perhaps the most important of all communication skills and is a necessary part of most learning situations. Reading, being a very complex skill, could best be studied in a separate paper. Reading will be mentioned in this paper only in relationship to other communication skills.

D. Definitions

The communication skills are writing, spelling, speaking, listening, and reading.

Language arts in this paper is a term which refers to all the communication skills except reading.

The term language refers to oral and written expression only.

E. Related Research

Studies concerning language development in children are readily available for reference. McCarthy[2] concludes that sentence length is an easily understood measure of linguistic maturity. Linguistic maturity is strongly related to the child's general maturity. She confirms the popularly held notion that girls develop language competence faster than boys.

Some studies show a positive correlation between I.Q. and vocabulary. Templin[3] found substantial correlation between I.Q. and

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[2]Dorotha McCarthy, Language Development in Children in Leonard Carmichael, A Manual of Child Psychology, Sec. Ed., (Wiley, 1954), p. 492-630, quoting Encyclopedia of Educational Research, p. 748.

[3]Mildred C. Templin, Certain Language Skills in Children; Their Development and Interrelationship, U. Minnesota, 1957, p. 183 quoting Encyclopedia of Educational Research, p. 748.

vocabulary at ages six to eight but concludes that the correlation tends to decrease toward older ages.

Noel[4] found no significant correlation between children's grammatical errors and occupational level of parents. She feels that the child will have a definite speech pattern by the time he enters first grade. This speech pattern will reflect environmental factors. The teacher then is confronted by the problem of how best to attempt alterations in the child's speech. Language arts teaching in the primary grades not only introduces new habits and skills but seeks to correct poor habits previously formed. Noel thinks that spoken language development should run ahead of competence in reading and writing. The child needs many opportunities for practice in speaking and understanding language.

Hahn[5] found a high correlation between a child's leadership abilities and his willingness to give speeches in front of a group.

In a study of children's handwriting, Newland[6] found that almost fifty percent of the errors was confined to four letters, a, e, r, and t.

Hughes[7] found a strong relationship existing among language

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[4]Doris I. Noel, A Comparative Study of the Relationship Between the Quality of the Child's Language Usage and The Quality and Types of Language Used in the Home, J. Ed. Res. 47; p. 161-167, 1953 quoting Encyclopedia of Educational Research, p. 748.

[5]Elise Hahn, Analyses of the Content and Form of the Speech of First Grade Children, Q. J. Speech 34; pp. 361-66, quoting Encyclopedia of Educational Research,p. 748.

[6]T. E. Newland, An Analytical Study of the Development of Illegibilities in Handwriting quoting the "Lower Grades to Adulthood" Journal of Educational Research, XXVI (1932), pp. 249-258.

[7]V. H. Hughes, A Study of the Relationship Among Selected Language Abilities, Journal of Education Research, XLVII (1953-54), pp. 97-106.

abilities. The strongest relationship (.64) existed between word meaning and spelling. In this same study other relationships found were; word meaning and reading .61, word meaning and language usage .52, reading and sentence sense .55, reading and punctuation .50. The correlations, in general, tend to show that each of these selected language abilities reported is related in a positive manner to the other language abilities independent of the effects of intelligence.

CHAPTER II

ORAL COMMUNICATION

A. Significance of Beginning Vocabulary

The child learns at an early age to use oral communication. His physical needs and his emotional needs are satisfied through oral communication. Through this same medium, he is introduced to social behavior. Learning to speak is a gradual process. The progress he makes in speech depends upon many factors; such as sex, siblings, family rank, mentality, and home environment. On the average, by the time he enters school, he will understand several thousand words and will be able to use many of them himself.[8] A child may be thought of as having four vocabularies. These four vocabularies are understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. His understanding vocabulary is large. He can understand many words that he makes no attempt to speak. His speaking vocabulary then is somewhat smaller than the understanding vocabulary. During the first year of school, he will acquire a reading vocabulary. This vocabulary is third in size. His written vocabulary that first year, will be small indeed.

Many studies concerning vocabulary have been made. These do not always agree in their findings. No one will wish to use the

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[8] Ruth Strickland, The Language Arts in the Elementary School, (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1951), pp. 17-68.

results of these studies to make hard and fast rules. However, some of the generalizations made, should prove helpful to first grade teachers.

> Children who begin to talk early and progress without difficulty tend to make similar progress in the development of reading and language skills.
>
> The age of the people with whom a child associates appears to influence his growth in language. The child who associates largely with adults may develop more rapidly than the child who associates mainly with children and may develop a more mature vocabulary, use longer sentences, and more complex ones.
>
> Children whose socioeconomic status is higher, tend to use longer sentences, a larger vocabulary, and to ask more questions.
>
> A number of studies have dealt with the relationship between language and intelligence. Since most intelligence tests are highly dependent on the use of language, it is difficult to know how accurate a measure they may be. Certainly a child with a good command of language should score better than a child with a poor command of language, but how completely his intelligence is responsible for that command of language is difficult to ascertain. Again, environment and school or home experience enter into the problem.
>
> Language and personality development are closely related in children, as are language and mental development. The child who acquires language easily, appears to find it easy to make social contacts, to be outgoing in his reactions and interests. The child for whom language skills present problems may feel inadequate and ineffective; he may respond in a variety of ways. This shows very clearly in the case of the child who comes to school using infantile expressions which other children either have never used or have long outgrown. His awareness of other children's reactions toward him may cause him to become withdrawn and silent, if he fears their ridicule and criticism, or highly aggressive if he feels frustrated or rebels against the treatment he receives.[9]

The child who has speech difficulties which are severe enough to require the help of the speech correctionist, may have a meager

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[9] Ibid., pp. 17-23.

vocabulary. Sometimes these children will not enter into class discussions. Some children become highly emotional when the teacher or other children fail to understand their speech. The actual extent of the speaking vocabulary of such children is hard to determine.

Hearing difficulties may affect the child's vocabulary. A hearing check at the time of school entrance is important. However, some hearing difficulties vary with circumstances. Colds, allergies, sinus trouble, and asthma may cause fluctuations in hearing losses. These fluctuations in hearing loss are harder to detect. First grade children often do not hear what is said because of inattentiveness. For this reason, hearing difficulties sometimes go undetected. The teacher thinks the child is merely inattentive.

B. Enrichment of Vocabulary

An individual may talk often and at great length with a meager vocabulary. A child may continue through school with a limited vocabulary unless conscious effort is made to help him. Vocabulary enrichment should be incorporated into daily activities.

In the English language, a single word may have several meanings. The first grade child may be acquainted with only one meaning. The teacher needs to be constantly alert to catch the errors children make and then help them gain new concepts of meaning for familiar words.

The story of the little girl in the act of playing doctor illustrates this point. After administering the proper medicines and instructions to her little playmate, she sat down and began tracing circles with her forefinger. An observant adult asked her

what she was doing. She said, "I'm a doctor and I'm making my rounds." She had been taught to make circles on paper. These were "rounds" to her.

Sometimes misconceptions of meaning are evidenced in children's drawings. One little girl illustrating Little Boy Blue drew a little boy with a blue face. Occasionally, poor enunciation on the part of the teacher is reflected in drawings, too. The story is told of the boy who illustrated Diddle, Diddle, Dumpling. He drew a boy in bed with mice crawling over the bed covering. His explanation was that those were the "mice on" John.[10]

Sometimes two words are so similar that the first grade child thinks and says the same word for both. Marry and merry, fairy and ferry, are examples.

Teachers have to be constantly aware of the changes in speech because of modern times. Teakettle, cupboard, rubbers, and porridge are examples of words that belong to the past but are often encountered in poems and stories. Helping the children understand unfamilar words is a part of the lesson presentation.

One way children expand their vocabularies is by having many opportunities to talk. Listening to stories, poems, and records is a good way to begin. Fairy tales and nursery rhymes are enjoyed by children of six. A part of the class will already be familiar with these, but repetition seldom bothers children this age. The story should be followed by an activity involving speech. Sometimes the story or parts of it may be retold. Since old time tales may vary,

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[10]Shane, Reddin, Gillespie, Beginning Language Arts Instruction With Children, (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1961), p. 23.

the children may wish to tell how this particular version differs from the way they have heard it before. Today's children have seen some of the old time tales dramatized on television. If so, this may be involved in the discussion.

Some stories lend themselves to dramatization in the classroom. Simple props are all that are needed. A table easily becomes a bridge or a house. Frequently children act out stories without need of props, supplying even the sound effects such as a knock, knock for the knocking on the door. Those who are too shy or immature to participate, may be the appreciative audience.

One of the difficulties encountered in language development is to get all children to participate. At times, the more aggressive pupils show the tendency to monopolize the entire period if permitted to do so. Those children must be taught not to interrupt, not to speak continously without regard for others, and when to become silent. Other children need to be encouraged if they participate at all.

Many insights into character are revealed in these informal discussions. If these sessions can be held near the end of the day, the teacher can make a few notes after dismissal. These notes can be extremely worthwhile in gaining understanding of the children. The child who tells things which he makes up will reveal himself in such sessions. The child who merely repeats what another child says, will soon be identified. The attention getter will try his wit, the shy will sit silently, and the dull or immature will seek to entertain himself with some object of immediate interest. Much observation and many notes are needed. Memory cannot be trusted. Time and effort given to recorded observations of the

individual child really pays, for the sooner a teacher has complete understanding of a child, the better the child can progress.

First days in school seem more enjoyable if what takes place in the classroom is not all new and strange. The teacher attempts to incorporate familiar activities into the daily program to counteract feelings of insecurity which can accompany a new experience. Discussions may involve events and places with which the child is familar. Games that the child is likely to know how to play may be used during the recreation periods. Stories, poems, and rhymes that many of the children have heard may be presented again. Children who have memorized nursery rhymes may be given an opportunity to recite them. The teacher may recite most of a poem and let the children recite the easiest lines in unison. Reciting together encourages the silent one to participate. Nursery rhymes are an excellent introduction to rhyming words. An awareness of similarity in sound of rhyming words is basic to later phonetic work. Stories often have repetition of lines that may be used for student participation. Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin, and I'll huff and I'll puff until I blow your house in, are examples of lines children enjoy saying.

Many excellent records of rhymes and stories are available. Often the children bring their own to share with others.

Most schools have some films and filmstrips available for story-telling. A filmstrip story is generally briefer than the written version. The children seem to enjoy filmstrips best, if the stories are already familiar to them.

Some programs presented through television may be worthwhile for first grade children. Whether or not television is incorporated into

instruction, a teacher should be aware of the tremendous influence TV has on today's children. One author speaks of television as a part of a "phantom curriculum".

> Children's books (including comic books), radio, and especially television, are creating a "phantom curriculum" for children and youth. This phantom curriculum, one steeped in language, is bringing to children a wealth of information which spans the centuries. It hurries the child from a re-creation of King Arthur's court to dramatic on-the-spot news that is literally seen as it happens. The mixture of times and of places--the transition from dinosaurs to space travel with a flip of a TV channel selector or a comic book page--may be confusing but it is educational, too. What a challenge and opportunity it is for the kindergarten-primary teacher to help make this new out-of-school curriculum meaningful to children as quickly as possible through developmental language experiences. It is wonderful, too, to contemplate the way in which the phantom curriculum helps the school by providing children with experiences which, while disorganized, can be "sorted out" in the school situation so as to extend greatly the knowledge assimilated during the kindergarten-primary years.[11]

C. Correction of Current Speech

The amount of correction of a child's speech will depend somewhat on the child and the situation. In the beginning months of first grade, the objective is not correct speech but just speech, a willingness to talk and share with others. Teachers, especially those who have taught many years, have trained themselves to listen for errors. They find it very difficult to let an error go by without calling the child's attention to it. The notion seems to persist, that to show a child an error, is to eliminate it. Actually all that may be accomplished is to make the child self-conscious and willing to be silent rather than incur correction. When a child seems to have trouble expressing himself because of limited vocabulary, the class may

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[11]Shane, Reddin, Gillespie, op. cit., p. 7.

be invited to contribute the right word. If the teacher of the group can realize the importance of informal talking together, the time spent in conversation will never be spoken of as "lost". A student's participation in group discussions truly becomes the foundation for success during the latter part of the first year and in a sense through all his school years.

> The first goal in language development in the modern school is to free the child so that he talks easily and confidently. Until a child will talk freely the teacher has little opportunity to learn the level of language development he has attained and what help he needs. It is impossible to improve the language of a child until there is some language to improve.[12]

All that has been said should not be construed to mean that a teacher in first grade need not worry about correct speech. Correct speech is important but the teacher must be aware that indiscriminate and constant correcting may produce no improvement whatever and may hinder correct speech. A child must first want to change his speech patterns. The language he uses is the language to which he is accustomed. He may not wish to speak differently.

> The primary school child mirrors the language usage of the home and community. This usage is acceptable to him because the people who use it are acceptable to him. He has no standards other than those of the culture in which he lives. Usage which deviates from that of his culture mileu may sound strange and different to him if he has a keen ear for language, but it does not sound better or correct; he may even think it queer or amusing.[13]

Gross errors such as "ain't" or "I done" are especially difficult to eradicate if the child has become accustomed to hearing them and

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[12] Strickland, op. cit., p. 93.

[13] Ibid., p. 109.

using them. A small minority of the class will use terms such as "belly" and "butt". Middle class people find their use objectionable. The teacher may accept these words as part of the child's background and therefore acceptable speech to the child. When the other children complain about so-and-so saying things that are "not nice", the teacher is on the spot. To accept behavior from one child and still not sanction it as group behavior, present difficulties. When to correct errors, and when to accept errors, are decisions to be made as the situation arises.

> In informal types of oral communication that constitute spontaneous expression, the child is engrossed in the ideas he is expressing, and he may consequently have little regard for the forms and technicalities of language. Even so, the fluency and purposefulness in such expression are desirable goals of language instructions, and they are likely to make for effectiveness. Aside from incidental correction of gross errors on the part of individual pupils, the teacher does little within such an expressional period to improve the form of expression except through her own good example, in directness of manner, clarity of enunciation, clear-cut sentence structure, use of vocabulary, and the like. It is through imitation of the teacher as a model in all respects that much of the improvement in children's expression comes.
>
> Whem some or all of the group need help in correcting specific errors and weaknesses, the teacher should schedule periods occasionally to give practice in skills, such as speaking in complete sentences, enunciating correctly and clearly, and choosing the correct word form to replace an incorrect one.[14]

D. Preservation of Social Heritage and Social Patterns

Teachers are faced with the problem of deciding how much of the old and traditional to cling to. Teachers are always being urged to keep up with the times. The press often accuses them of presenting

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[14]Mildred A. Dawson, Language Teaching in Grades 1 and 2, (Tarrytown-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Co., 1957), pp. 74-75.

outdated and useless subject matter. Administrations sometimes yield to current desires of citizen groups. Under these pressures, teachers face difficult decisions concerning materials to present. Children seem to enjoy the highly emotional TV adventures and the imaginative outer space stories but the old time fairy tales and nursery rhymes should not be forgotten. These are a part of our American heritage. Stories that have given children enjoyment through the past, need to be known by children today. Our heroes and heroines, such as Washington, Lincoln, Daniel Boone, and Betsy Ross, must not be forgotten in this space conscious world.

The language story hour can perpetuate these tales. A child of six has little concept of time and age. He may not know how long ago these stories happened or which stories are true and which are fictional. The child will be aware only of the pleasure he derives from hearing and discussing the stories. The teacher will have additional pleasure knowing she is helping to build the foundation for later adventures into literature of the past.

The language arts classes promote social development. Learning to take turns, to share, and to cooperate with other children are social learnings to be attained. There are times when decisions will be made by the wishes of the majority. The question of fairness to others will often be discussed. Children in first grade can be made aware of the underlying principles of democracy.

The six year old is egocentric. I and My predominate in his speech. In an attempt to outdo other children, he may claim to have toys or pets he does not actually possess. Sometimes he will profess to have traveled widely and seen everything mentioned in class.

Lecturing or scolding by the teacher will not correct such a situation. As children work and learn together, gradual improvement in attitudes and social conduct will be apparent in most of them. Patience and reteaching are required. Things may go smoothly for days with everyone politely taking turns. Something exciting happens and suddenly everyone is talking at once, getting louder by the moment. Relapses are to be expected but the over all pattern can be one of improvement.

Children need freedom but freedom within boundaries. Children need to make decisions for themselves but only those they are capable of making. Children need to learn to work and play together but without unnecessary stress on conformity. Children should experience the thrill of a difficult task well done. Definite lessons cannot be planned for teaching good attitudes and strength of character. These are side products every teacher hopes to see develop as the year progresses. The language arts lessons and projects are suited for promoting desirable attitudes and behavior.

E. Recognition of Emotional Needs of Children

Much has been written lately concerning the emotional needs of children. Guidance programs have been introduced into some schools to aid pupils in solving pertinent personal problems. Unfortunately most guidance programs have been introduced into schools on the secondary level. These programs have concentrated almost solely on guiding children into proper colleges or future employment. A guidance program that extends through the entire educational program is sorely needed. In the lower elementary grades, the greatest service of the guidance program is to aid the teacher in alleviating problems of

emotional adjustment. In the absence of a guidance counselor, the teacher must function alone. In the fortunate situation where guidance counselors are available, training in guidance for the classroom teacher is still important. The teacher is usually the most influential adult in a child's life outside his own home environment. This role is not to be taken lightly.

Since most of the day in first grade is devoted to teaching language arts, the emotional needs of the children must be met during this time. Schuster and Phoghoft in their recent book give an excellent treatment to the emotional needs of the elementary school child.

> THE EMOTIONAL NEED OF FEELING ACCEPTED. Every one must believe that he receives the support and acceptance of some one person. This emotional need of being accepted for what one is begins, of course, in the home and continues throughout life. As this need is met, the individual learns to relate himself to other people more satisfactorily.
>
> THE EMOTIONAL NEED OF FEELING SUCCESSFUL. It is not enough for a child to secure praise and approval from someone; he must also experience a sense of progress or accomplishment. When the child sees that he has done something in a satisfactory manner, he is building up a reservoir of self-esteem and confidence. It is true that failuresare inevitable, but even failure to achieve can be turned into a profitable and valuable experience. Still, the child must have more successes rather than an overwhelming number of repeated, frustrating failures.
>
> THE EMOTIONAL NEED OF FEELING INDEPENDENT. As the child acquires feelings of acceptance and experiences success, he is ready to become more independent. He needs better understandings of his inner forces, but especially he needs to develop an improved system of inner controls. The need to feel progressively more independent is surely predicated upon the child's ability to handle situations more adequately; hence, he needs security and confidence in himself as he seeks the more desirable status of being an independent person.
>
> THE EMOTIONAL NEED OF FEELING AND BEING A PEER GROUP MEMBER. The identification with age mates is a step forward toward sound mental health and social adjustment. A

good peer relationship is evidence that emotional growth is progressing and that the child is learning to live with people. He finds also a certain kind of status as a member of a peer group.

THE EMOTIONAL NEED OF FEELING FREE TO BE CREATIVE AND TO ENJOY NEW EXPERIENCES. Children are creative in that they can express themselves and their feelings through many mediums. A child is doing something original whenever it is "first" experience for him. Children must feel free to express themselves and to be creative as they seek satisfying new experiences. Of course, these expressions and desires for new experiences must be acceptable in themselves and gauged according to the child's age, abilities, and even certain environmental conditions.[15]

Learning to read is the major accomplishment expected from the first grade child. Most of the day in the first grade is spent in learning to read or in related activities. Teachers and parents become very concerned if the child does not respond well to reading instruction. The personality development of the child may be affected if he does not progress satisfactorily.

> Learning to read has become a necessity and a point of extreme pressure in many modern schools and homes and the child who finds difficulty in mastering the process is often sadly warped by his failure. A child who has shown no personality problems during his preschool years may develop serious problems of behavior and attitude if his efforts to learn to read bring only defeat and frustration instead of the satisfaction and commendation he sees other children receiving. If the teacher does not recognize his problem, diagnose it, and offer the necessary guidance to achieve success, he develops a sense of inadequacy and inability which makes him feel he is different from other children and forms a stumbling block to success in other areas as well. Nothing is more devastating to the child's personality than inability to do what he wants and tries to do and what is expected of him. Unfavorable habits and attitudes grow rapidly and may follow the child through life because of his linguistic failures. Success in mastering linguistic skills opens the way to many types of satisfying experiences, and makes possible wholesome social, emotional, and mental development.[16]

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[15]Albert Shuster and Milton Ploghoft, The Emerging Elementary Curriculum (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1963), p. 46.

[16]Strickland, op. cit., p. 24.

Since learning to read is of utmost importance to every child, the teacher must seek to build the proper foundation for reading, from the first day the child enters school. Teachers and parents sometimes fail to realize that reading has its foundation in oral communication.

> Reading is talking. It is a mode of communication in which the writer speaks through the use of symbols. For this reason facility in the use of oral language is closely related to success in reading. At any age or grade level the child must be able to use sentences orally comparable in difficulty to those he is asked to read, if he is to read with comprehension.
>
> Some children enter first grade unable to speak in simple, direct sentences. Some children in higher grades are unable to use the complex sentence structure and vocabulary of their textbooks. It is small wonder they have difficulty in learning to read with understanding. Control over the oral language is prerequisite to successful reading.[17]

Assuming then, that this is true, logical preparation for reading, is oral communication. In the beginning weeks of first grade, liberal assignments of time can be devoted to many activities which stimulate children to talk.

F. Summary

A positive relationship exists between a child's vocabulary and his success in school. Activities which help the teacher become aware of each child's vocabulary, are essential.

Efforts to broaden vocabulary and to correct misconceptions of word meanings, are a part of beginning instruction in language arts.

No hard and fast rules for correction of speech errors can be made. The child and the situation are the determining factors.

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[17]Kathleen Hester, Teaching Every Child to Read (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1955), p. 48.

The foundation for democratic living can be laid in the language arts teachings. Perpetuation of the traditional aspects of our educational system is accomplished through language arts.

Helping children adjust emotionally and socially are involved in language arts activities.

CHAPTER III

LISTENING

A. Introductory Statements

Listening is a necessary part of many learning situations. Recently writers have become more concerned about listening as a learning skill to be taught. There seems, at present, disagreement among authors.

> Although it is commonly recognized that children receive much information by listening and that listening is an important part of the classroom situation, there is disagreement as to how listening skills can be taught.[18]

Since children vary in listening ability, the teacher should consider this variability when attempting to improve the listening ability of students.

Maturation seems to be involved in a child's ability to listen. The interest span of the immature child is so short that he cannot listen to a simple story and then tell what it is about. He may even appear to be listening but questioning later shows his thoughts were elsewhere.

Ability to recall events in proper sequence is an important learning skill. Teachers in first grade can help children acquire this through enjoyable stories presented to them. Children can be helped to

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[18] Shuster and Ploghoft, op. cit., p. 220.

retell the story in correct sequence or the teacher may retell the story briefly letting the children supply parts of it as the story progresses. Some of the best known stories are available with illustrations and at moderate cost. The teacher can mount these pictures and then let the children display them in proper sequence.

Simple games involving listening can help the teacher discover the listening maturity of her various pupils. Even a simple direction such as, "Close your eyes", will not be followed by all children in a large group. The teacher may increase the difficulty of the game by putting two directions into one statement. "Touch your ear and then touch your desk," might be used. By simple means a teacher may early determine the listening maturation of her pupils and plan her teaching accordingly. However, the teacher must be aware that school environment factors are involved in listening. There may be disruptive behavior in the room. Objects of interest in the room, impending parties, and extremely hot weather, are examples of environmental factors that may affect listening.

B. Improving Listening

Some writers feel that teachers could improve listening habits of children if listening were made a definite part of the language program.

> As with other learning activities it seems that effective listening habits must be fostered by (1) making listening a part of the regular classroom routine rather than a drill activity: (2) providing listening situations in which children can see a purpose: (3) providing opportunities for children to think critically about the things listened to and to offer their own ideas on the subject.

> Listening must be looked upon by teachers as a part of the total language development of children. It is closely related to the speech development of the child, as it brings in ideas and information which form much of the background for speech. Because there is much yet to be learned about the development of listening skills of children, the classroom teacher may wish to attempt some of her own techniques in teaching for better listening and learning.[19]

This statement does encourage the teacher to experiment in teaching listening skills in spite of the fact that our knowledge regarding teaching of listening is very incomplete. Strickland makes very definite statements about the nature of listening.

> Listening and speaking need to be thought of together because one cannot function satisfactorily without the other. Listening is the intake aspect and is concerned with the broadening and enrichment of the self while speaking is the outgoing expression aspect. Children need to learn to speak effectively. Skill in listening progresses through several clearly discernible stages while children are in the primary school. Children vary greatly in their ability to listen during these years but they appear to follow the same general sequence of development. The steps appear to be these:
>
> "Little conscious listening except as the child is directly and personally concerned with what is being presented
>
> Easily distracted by people and things in the environment
>
> Half listening while holding fast to his own ideas and waiting to insert them at the first opportunity
>
> Listening passively with apparent absorption but little or no reaction
>
> Listening, forming associations, and responding with items from his own experience rather than reacting to what is presented
>
> Listening and expressing some reaction through questions and comments
>
> Listening with evidence of genuine mental and emotional participation
>
> Listening with real meeting of minds"[20]

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[19] Ibid., p. 221.

[20] Ruth Strickland, The Language Arts in the Elemntary School, pp. 114-115, quoting The Language and Mental Development of Children, Bulltin XXIII, No. 2, Bloomington: Division of Research and Field Services, Indiana University, 1947.

One of the common complaints voiced by teachers is, "Children simply do not listen." This complaint is often heard from the teacher who has a group with low mental ability or low achievement records. With these groups, teachers are apt to repeat instructions, speak more loudly, or preface directions with the words, "Now you listen to me. This is important." Reprimands for inattentiveness seem to bring about little improvement in listening.

More and more, teachers are accepting that children vary in ability to listen. Determining factors are maturity, mental ability, emotional adjustment, and training. Training in listening skills will not assure one hundred per cent attentiveness. However, a teacher should givethe teaching of listening, thoughtful consideration and study. Dawson stresses the importance of developing good listening habits.

> It is highly important that the teacher train children to be thoughtful listeners. If she establishes the practice of giving directions only once--plainly, clearly, impressively--the children soon realize that they are expected to know what to do after a single telling. Some occasions may call for repetition; but in general it should be the teacher's aim to give directions well the first time so that no pupil learns NOT TO LISTEN because he knows that they will be repeated.
>
> Training in listening is especially necessary in these modern times. Most homes have radios and television sets that are turned on much of the time, even when conversation and family discussions are going on. The child must necessarily learn to shut out either the family's talking or the program. He therefore is learning NOT to listen to one thing in order that he may listen to another. Children tend, for this reason, to be quite adept in tuning out what does not interest them; and the teacher needs to be sure that she herself is sufficiently interesting and compelling so that the children do not tune her out, even unintentionally.
>
> The observant teacher knows that she can help children listen with close and continued attention if she will provide for simultaneous visual appeal so that the eye reinforces the ear; she will associate listening with opportunities for the children to do things, to participate. That is, listening is

aided when the teacher takes into account the children's tendencies and their natural interests in active and concrete types of learning.

Children may be helped to grow in listening power if the teacher follows some or all of the following suggestions.

1. Be sure that the children have a purpose for listening, a purpose that is suitable to their level of maturity, to the type of material, and to the occasion. A different mind set is called for as purposes vary. There may be CASUAL LISTENING for enjoyment, INTENT LISTENING to ascertain the answer to a question, and CRITICAL LISTENING to select the best of several stories.
2. Provide a classroom atmosphere conducive to listening: quiet, comfortable, relaxed. Arrange that the young listeners sit as close as possible to the speaker or oral reader.
3. Lead the children to expect meaning in whatever they are listening to. Encourage them to ask questions when they do not understand or when they want further details. Encourage an attitude of mental curiosity.
4. Always prepare the children for listening by recalling related familiar experiences or materials; by developing new words that are likely to be heard; and by questions that arouse curiosity or a feeling of mild suspense.
5. Remember that opportunities to listen for different purposes arise throughout the school day. Take advantage of them.
6. Provide that the pupils purposefully summarize or utilize what they have heard through such follow-up activities as dramatization, making an illustrative mural or individual pictures, constructing illustrative models, and the like.
7. Help the children to set up a growing list of standards for effective listening so that they will learn when they should listen, how they should listen, and what it is important to remember in specific in instances.[21]

C. Summary of Listening

Teachers need a better understanding of listening. Some children actually cannot listen as well as others.

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[21]Mildred Dawson, op. cit., pp. 37-40.

Improvement in listening is possible but is a skill that is improved by many related activities rather than by specific drills or exercises.

CHAPTER IV

WRITTEN LANGUAGE

A. Introductory Statements

Written language is included in the plans for the first grade language arts program. However, not much time will be devoted directly to written work. Most authors agree that children are not ready for written language until several skills related to writing, have become easy for them.

The mechanics of handwriting must become easy for a child before he can enjoy writing sentences. Difficulties in spelling also hinder the free flow of thought. Success in reading precedes successful writing. Most of the children will not read, write, and spell with ease until near the end of the first year. The foundation for success in writing is not a separate structure. All the language arts are built together. A positive relationship exists between creative writing and wide reading. The first grade teacher who teaches more than the basic reading text, who strives for individualized reading achievement, and who encourages wide use of the library, is aiding the child in creative writing. Some authors differentiate between the skills necessary for creative writing and for functional writing. First grade writing is more functional than creative but the foundations for both appear the same at this grade level.

B. Fostering Good Writing Attitudes

Attitudes are not taught but are affected by teaching. A child's attitudes are also affected by attitudes of his family, of his peers, and of his teacher. The teacher's attitude towards writing seems especially important.

> To most adults writing is at best an arduous and distasteful task. Feelings of inadequacy well up within us at the very though of having to project our ideas on paper, and as a result we are past masters at avoiding most writing situations. It is this behavior of adults which should cause the present-day teacher to examine carefully the techniques employed in the teaching of writing. In many schools the approach to writing is approximately the same as it was when we were children. The emphasis is still on spelling, punctuation, margins, and a composition-a-day, to the exclusion of writing for pleasure and for the opportunity it affords for personal development. We all know too well the methods which built in us the horror and fear of writing. No well-punctuated sentence, no correctly spelled composition was worth the price. Fortunately, we can give children a start which will enable them to experience real joy in this form of self-expression.
>
> If children are to write willingly and with honest satisfaction, if they are to express their own ideas instead of restating the ideas of others, then certain conditions must exist. The teacher should cultivate continuously in herself an awareness of the meanings and wonders of everyday life. By being a vivid, colorful person, she stimulates children's vigorous curiosity and joy in exploring new interests. This is the starting place for the accumulation of many meaningful experiences which are so interesting and vital to children that they want to talk about them. It is here that the teacher, watching very carefully for manifestations of the individual spirit, gives enthusiastic appreciation to any evidences of original and unique expression. Thus children are moved to tell their thought in a way that is truly their own.[22]

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[22]June Ferebee, Doris Jackson, Dorothy Saunders, and Alvina Treut, They All Want To Write (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1939), pp. 7-9.

C. Basic Skills Required

A child is not ready to write until he can state his thoughts in complete sentences. The building of sentence sense can be done in the reading class. In the reading class, the child may also learn capitalization and punctuation. The teacher often asks a child to read the sentence which answers a specific question. The child learns to start with the beginning capital and stop at the period. Periods are stop signals. They signify the end of the author's thought. In beginning reading, the period and the end of the line coincide. Later in the year, the child is introduced to the sentence that is continued on the next line. Some time needs to be spent in reading these long sentences aloud. The child learns that the thought is not complete until the period signals a stop. Children like to vie with each other to see who can read the lines best. Time and patience are required to break the habit of stopping at the end of the line of print. The child's comprehension depends upon reading the complete sentence as such. This idea of continuity of thought from one line to the next is involved in writing sentences, also. In a child's first efforts in written expression, he will put each sentence on a separate line. If the sentence happens to be too long, he may write the extra words above the line instead of using the following line. If he uses the next line to finish the sentence, he is apt to place a period on the first line as well as at the end of the sentence. Children seem to associate periods with the end of lines and are slow to comprehend that periods indicate the end of a particular idea or thought, and are not used at the end of every line of print. Occasionally children put a period after every word. The teacher can show them in the reading text, that space is used to indicate separation

of words. Children are apt to put periods after their own names until taught otherwise.

Dictated stories are helpful in acquiring sentence sense. The children may suggest several sentences and then choose the best to be printed. Quite often the first grade child uses phrases or single words to answer questions. The child may be so immature that he is unable to use complete sentences. However, the child may be able to speak in complete sentences but has not been encouraged to do so in his pre-school environment. Children can learn more easily to speak in complete sentences if they understand why the teacher insists upon it. Children can be taught that a complete sentence helps the listener understand better the ideas of the speaker. The teacher may say, "I'm sure you know what you mean when you answer with just one word. Will you say it in a complete sentence so that the rest of us will know, too?" At first, the children will need help forming complete sentences. A few of the children will be unable to form them at all.

D. Learning Capitalization and Punctuation

In first grade, children are taught to capitalize names, the pronoun I, and the first word of a sentence.

They are taught the use of the period and the question mark. In reading lessons and in spelling lessons, children are introduced to the hyphen, aspostrophe, comma, and exclamation point. An understanding of the purpose of each mark of punctuation facilitates later written expression.

E. Summary

Fluency in reading, handwriting, and spelling precedes enjoyable written expression.

An attitude of enjoyment in writing is sought by the teacher.

The purpose of punctuation marks is presented in the first grade.

CHAPTER V

HANDWRITING

A. Introduction

Part of the time alloted to language arts must be devoted to teaching and practicing handwriting. Teachers may vary in the amount of time they give to practicing this skill; also, in the levels of achievement expected. Children in first grade are usually taught manuscript writing. Some teachers introduce writing in the beginning weeks of school. Other teachers may delay its introduction until later in the year. Some schools supply each child with a prescribed handwriting text or practice sheets. Usual practice is to display a set of alphabet cards in each school room.

In years past, a great deal of importance was placed upon the ability to write a "good hand". The old copy books reveal the high respect paid to a good penman. Page after page was devoted to the practice of meaningless lines and curves which was supposed to promote grace and symmetry in writing.

Attitudes concerning the teaching of handwriting have changed so radically that there is danger of neglecting this skill in the schools today. Handwriting is not something to be taught and practiced a certain number of minutes per week and neglected the rest of the time. Practice periods for teaching specific skills or letter formations are needed. But if the handwriting teaching is to be worthwhile, good

writing must be stressed in all areas of subject matter in all grades, and whenever the child must express himself in writing.

Most first grade teachers recognize that not all children are capable of writing well. A great deal of practice and forcing children to "do over" poorly done work is useless if the child is not physically mature enough for the assignment. Baker recognizes that individual differences in writing readiness are present in the beginners in first grade.

> Readiness for writing, however, varies with individuals and the writing program should recognize these differences. As in reading, readiness to write depends largely upon the degree of total maturity that a child has reached. Enforced practice cannot make up for the lack of maturity, and it may set up undesirable tensions and strains.
>
> How does the teacher judge writing readiness? She observes the child's muscular development, his ability to draw and color, his use of scissors, crayons and other tools or materials, and his attitude toward writing. Children who are immature physically and mentally make little attempt to copy words and sentences.
>
> By the middle of the school year many first grade children will be ready to write. After the child has learned to write his name and simple words for get-well cards and birthday cards, and wants to learn to write other things he is ready for instruction in formal handwriting.[23]

B. Handwriting Instruction

One of the first things to determine when a child enters school, is whether he is right or left handed. Almost all children will have developed a hand preference by the age of school entrance. An occasional child will use first one hand and then the other. He may

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[23]Zelma W. Baker, The Language Arts, the Child, and the Teacher (San Francisco: Fearon Publishers, 1955), p. 1.

not as yet have developed a preference or he may have been encouraged to use both hands by relatives who value ambidexterity. Observing these children in relaxed free play will give additional help in deciding hand preference.

Research has been done concerning the advisability of changing handedness of children. The consensus of opinion is that if the child has a definite preference for the left hand, do not change him. If he has no decided preference, encourage him to be right handed since there are advantages of being right handed.

A teacher's next step is to get the child to hold his pencil in a position that will promote the greatest ease and facility in writing. This is by no means easy if the child has done must drawing or coloring previous to entering school and already has a fixed awkward position that he decidedly prefers. Blackboard practice promotes correct pencil holding habits. Children enjoy writing on the board and the teacher can readily observe difficulties. The disadvantage is that blackboard space is very limited in schools of today. Only a few children can use the board at one time. For the child who holds his pencil in a tight perpendicular position, board work is sure to bring improvement. If board practice seems impractical, large sheets of unlined paper and black crayons may be used.

The writing of the letter O is a good starting place for first grade writing. Many manuscript letters are based on the circle. Some teachers begin by presenting letters to trace. The child then makes the letters on his own. Other teachers use the blackboard to show the correct writing and the child reproduces it on paper. Regardless of presentation method, all children will not make the O correctly. Some

children will start the O at the bottom instead of the top. Some will make the O with a left to right movement. Others will reverse the motion and be informed that the letter is "wrong". Since the end product appears the same, the child may be hard to convince that there is a right way and wrong way to make the letter. Some incorrect letter formation may be undetected since the teacher cannot possibly observe all the children at once.

One of the first words a child writes, is his name. His name identifies his belongings. He receives praise at home when he can write his name, so motivation is no problem. Whether the child should print his name in capital letters or with only a beginning capital is controversial. Many kindergartens and some first grade teachers prefer all capitals because the letters are easier to make and are of uniform height. Other teachers object to this method since later in the year a child is taught that only the first letter of names is capitalized.

Some authors feel that isolated letters or words should never be practiced in handwriting classes, lest children lose sight of the true purpose of writing. These authors insist that writing is a tool to convey meaning and the child must always write something that does just that. Perhaps these authors are not cognizant of the fact that for six year old children, letters and single words have much meaning. When practicing a letter, the child may say, "That's in my name." When practicing a word the child may tell a little incident that this word brings to his mind. However, it is well to terminate the writing lesson by using the practiced word in a sentence. One of the goals mentioned in written language is to promote the ability to write in sentences. The handwriting class can help to do this. The teacher may ask several

children to suggest sentences before one is chosen to put on the board for all the children to copy. This type of writing lesson would not be used until the child has had experience in reading.

Lined paper should be used soon after the child begins to write. The children soon learn that the lines help them produce letters of uniform height. The teacher shows the children how to correctly form the letters using a lined blackboard or large sheets of paper designed for this purpose. Some children will need individual help to be able to reproduce what the teacher has written. A few children may be too immature to use lines. Teaching children to use lines in the writing class has other values besides uniformity in letter formation. The use of lines reinforces the teaching of left to right progression and starting at the top of a page and progressing downward line by line.

A child should have acquired ease in the mechanics of writing before trying to write creatively. If a child must give most of his attention to forming his letters correctly, the flow of thought is impeded.

C. Summary

The physical maturity of a child must be considered in determining the level of achievement expected of him.

Handwriting can be improved by having specific periods for practice. However, legibility in all written work at all grade levels must be required for a successful handwriting program.

CHAPTER VI

SPELLING

A. Introductory Statements

Years ago words were spelled orally a great deal. Friday afternoon "spell-downs" and evening "spelling bees" were very popular. Ability to spell was held in high regard. Often the participants in these matches could spell words which had no meaning for them. Oral spelling has fallen into disrepute and is no longer considered worthwhile. Critics contended that since the only time you need to spell a word, is when you write it, spelling orally is a waste of time. If too much emphasis is placed on oral spelling, a child may try to master a new reading word by saying the names of letters instead of sounding out the word. In attempting to spell a difficult word, the child may try to recall how it sounded as he spelled it orally. The teaching of spelling has therefore been subjected to change in recent years.

> The aim of teaching spelling is to enable boys and girls to spell correctly words which they need to write. Spelling should neither be thought nor taught as an isolated subject in which pupils memorize the spelling of words in lists to be used later. Spelling is an integral part of every writing activity in which children engage. Separate drills and practice periods are of value only as they contribute to more accurate spelling in written expression.[24]

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[24] English Language Communication, op. cit., p. 63.

B. Spelling Instruction

Children begin to spell as soon as they begin to read. Sometimes a child can spell before he knows the names of the letters. He prints on paper his mental image of the word. This mental imagery is important in learning to spell. Many of the skills which promote fluency in reading, also promotes fluency in spelling. In the beginning reading stages, children may confuse words which begin with the same letter. Teachers strive to get the child to see the word as a whole. Seeing the word as a whole helps spell the word.

As the children begin to use phonetic clues to master words, their spelling ability increases. When the teacher is writing on the board, the children should be invited to help spell the necessary words. The children can supply the beginning and ending letters. Many words are not spelled phonetically but enough are, that the mastery of phonics is definitely an aid to spelling. Near the end of the first grade, the abler students will be able to read a long list of rhyming words by substituting one initial consonant for another. The child uses the same technique in spelling them.

Oral spelling became so unpopular a few years ago, that most teachers now do not use it at all. Oral spelling, however, does have some value. Oral spelling is often a stimulus for learning to spell in the primary grades, especially in the first grade. Children enjoy the sound of their own voices. Reading aloud is sometimes more fun than silent reading. Spelling aloud may be more fun than writing on paper. Children often challenge each other to spell words. They may ask the the teacher to listen as they spell some word. Spelling aloud should be recognized for its stimulus value.

Oral spelling also makes mandatory the learning of the names of the letters of the alphabet. Learning to recognize these letters easily is one skill to be mastered in the first grade. Occasional spelling aloud from open readers not only encourages the child to master the alphabet, but gives the teacher a means of checking to see what children need individual help with the alphabet.

Teachers in first grade should not rush into spelling by presenting formal spelling lists. They should be content to strive for the broad goals that will make for good spelling in later years. Careful visual scrutiny is a foundation skill for both reading and spelling. Careful listening is a part of spelling. A child cannot attach the proper ending on a word if he does not hear it. The simple written work that is presented in handwriting or language, will foster a child's desire to spell. He will be made to feel the necessity of spelling. If a pupil has acquired the foundation skills and has a good attitude towards spelling, he is on his way to spelling success.

C. Summary

Skill in spelling may be acquired incidentally as the child acquires skill in reading.

A good attitude towards spelling is a desirable goal.

Formal spelling lists will seldom be used in first grade.

CHAPTER VII

PHYSICAL EDUCATION, MUSIC, AND ART

The contributions that physical education, music, and art make to the language arts program, bear close similarities.

These subjects are taught without grouping. Most first grade children are grouped for reading instruction and occasionally for other skill subjects. A child soon learns to rank himself and as a result may acquire feelings of inadequacy or supremacy. In subjects where all children work or play together, the child feels an equality with the rest of the class. Sometimes the child who feels defeated in the regular classroom subjects, may excel in music, art, or physical education.

These subjects are relaxing for most children. Less stress is placed upon success. The use of the big muscles in physical education classes is relaxing. Some of the music period is devoted to rhythms and action songs, again allowing for much body movement. Since these are all taught rather informally, there are many opportunities for talking together freely. Participating freely in these classes helps the child participate in the more formal learning activities.

Games which improve muscular control and eye and hand coordination are presented in physical education classes. Both of these, muscular control and eye-hand coordination, are a part of successful learning in language arts activities.

Art activities can be based in listening to stories and poems. Children may illustrate some part that they like. Both the listening ability of the child and his maturity can be determined to some extent by his illustrations. Almost all children like to present their drawings in front of the class. The child may describe his picture briefly. Even the shy child is able to talk before a group if he has a drawing to show.

The teacher has more time in these classes to observe the children as they sing, draw, and play together. The child's emotional and social adjustment can often be determined better in these classes than in a more formal classroom situation.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The language arts, speaking, listening, writing, and spelling, are related by overlapping skills. These relationships provide a sound basis for coordinating the language arts when common skills are stressed.

Some of the most important common skills are reviewed in the following paragraphs.

Listening is an important skill since it permeates every activity of the day. Children need help in learning to listen attentively. Good listening habits are promoted in class discussions and in listening to stories and poems. Activities which require the child to follow oral directions are especially good for it is easy for the child to understand the purpose in listening.

Children need to be able to recognize sentences and to use them first in oral expression and later in written expression. One way this skill is promoted is through listening to stories and then discussing them. Another way is for children to contribute sentences in the handwriting class or in the writing of dictated stories. As children listen to the various sentences contributed and attempt to select the best for class use, their skill in formulating sentences improves.

The ability to put ideas in proper sequence is improved by stressing sequence in retelling stories the class has heard or read. The

writing of dictated stories also requires putting ideas in proper sequence.

Since first grade children imitate the speech they hear, the vocabulary can be improved and broadened by simple discussion periods where everyone participates. Listening to stories and poems will broaden the vocabulary for the children will attempt to use some of the same words as they discuss the story or retell it.

Left to right progression of letters and words is continually emphasized in spelling and writing. Stressing left to right progression in spelling and writing seems to be especially helpful to those children who tend to reverse words in reading.

Some critics say the primary curriculum has been reading centered with not enough time allotted to teaching other language arts. When the language arts are taught in an integrated manner, one particular art is not likely to be overemphasized or neglected.

The language arts, speaking, listening, writing, and spelling, should be closely integrated in the present day first grade curriculum.

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